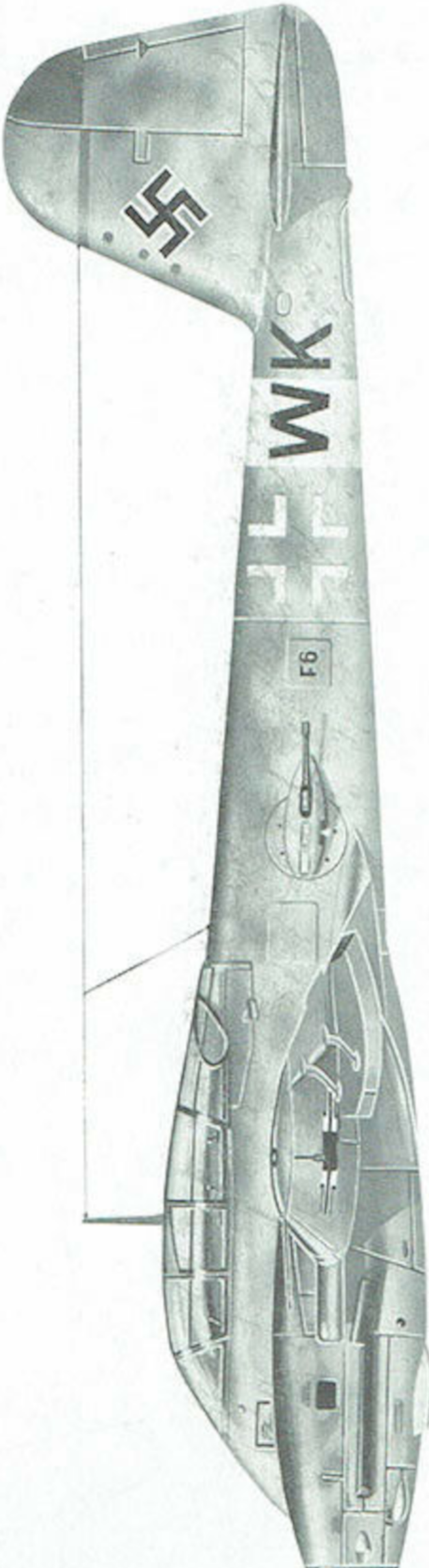
PROFILE PUBLICATIONS

The Messerschmitt Me 210/410 Series



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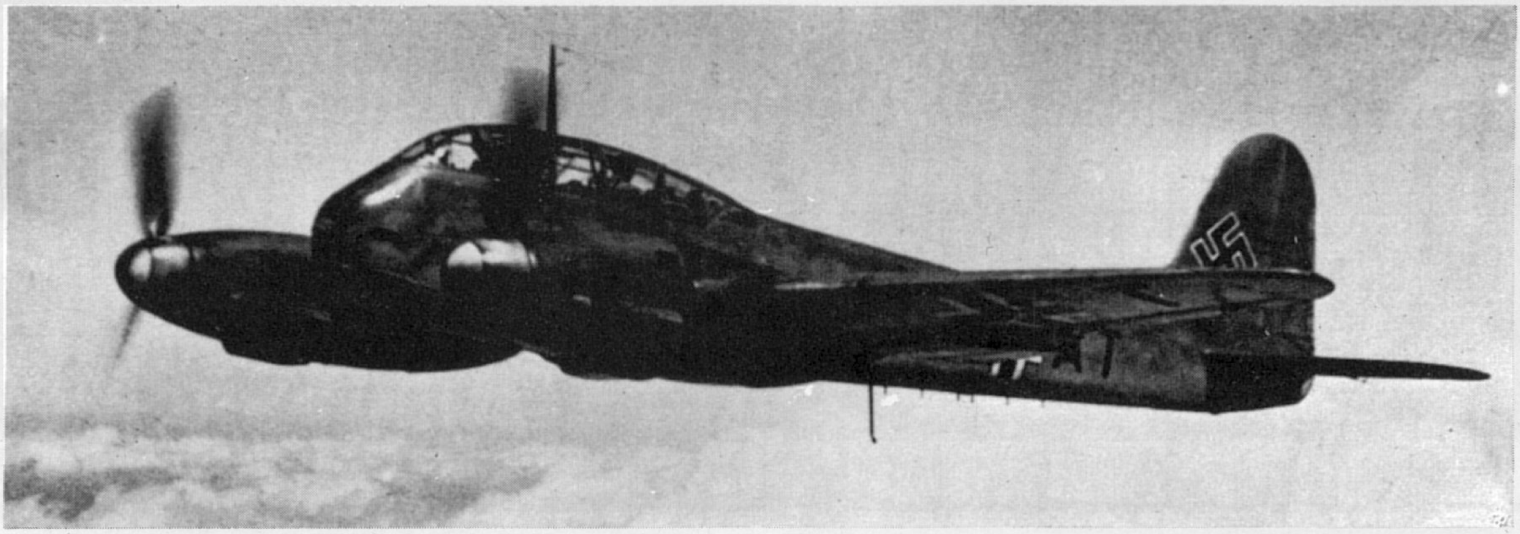


An early production Me 210A-1, coded "VN+AT," with the shorter fuselage. (Photo: H. J. Nowarra)

The Messerschmitt Me 210/410 Series

by J. Richard Smith

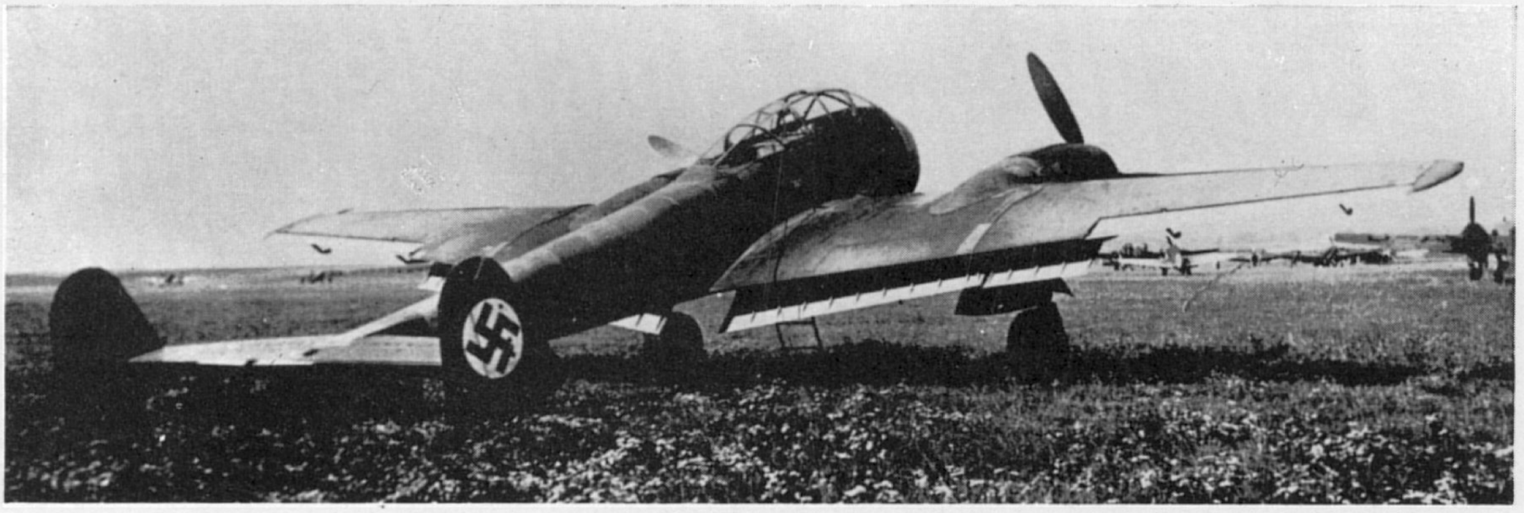
VYING with the Heinkel He 177 for the doubtful distinction of being the *Luftwaffe's* least successful combat aircraft, the Messerschmitt Me 210 was conceived in 1937 as a replacement for the Bf 110 *Zerstörer* or strategic fighter. Even at this stage the Bf 110 was evincing some shortcomings, particularly as regards manoeuvrability. Even so, the Bf 110 was publicised as Göring's "Wonder Weapon", much of the cream of the fighter units being drawn into the newly formed *Zerstörergeschwader*.

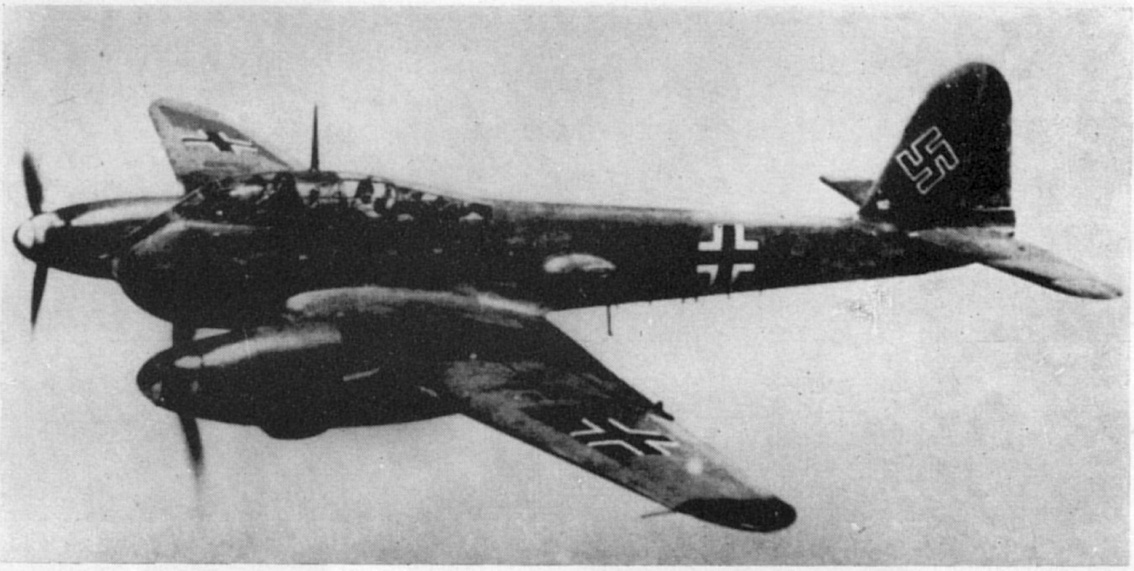
It was not until the Battle of Britain that Göring's dream was at last shattered and the many shortcomings of the aircraft revealed. The Bf 110, although quite fast, was no match for the highly manoeuvrable Hurricanes and Spitfires of R.A.F. Fighter Command. In fact the ludicrous situation developed whereby the single-seat Bf 109 had to protect the Bf 110 escort *fighters* from attack!

The Me 210 was projected as a more powerful replacement for the Bf 110, able to undertake a wider variety of combat duties. The specification also brought forth two other designs: the Arado 240, which was a more ambitious design, and was virtually ignored by the R.L.M.; and the little known Ago Ao 225. The Ao 225 was the last, and most ambitious design of the *Ago Flugzeugwerke G.m.b.H.* before it was taken over by the Junkers company towards the end of 1938. The most radical feature of the projected design was the employment of a single engine (probably of the 2,500 h.p. Daimler Benz DB 606 type) buried in the fuselage driving two conventionally positioned airscrews via a flexible drive. The radical nature of the project, plus the losses being experienced with the company's Ao 192 airliner, led to its abandonment.

The Ar 240 was allocated a low development priority whilst the Me 210 was given the full backing

D-AABF, the first Me 210 prototype; apart from the obvious feature of the twin tail, the early cockpit canopy is noteworthy. (Photo: H. J. Nowarra)



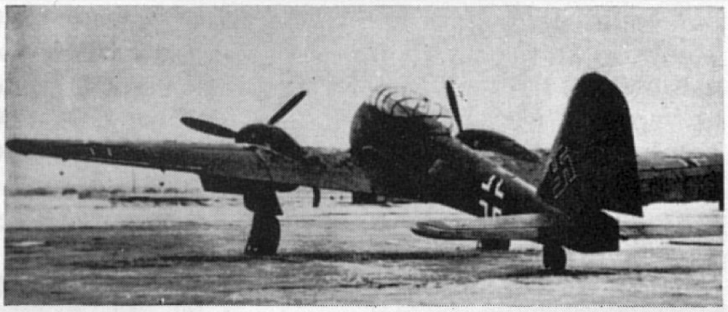


The Me 210A-1 carried a forward-firing armament of two 20 mm. MG 151 cannon and two 7·9 mm. MG 17 machine-guns, with two rearward-firing FDL 131 machine-gun barbettes mounting 13 mm. weapons. (Photo: H. J. Nowarra)

of the German Air Ministry even to the radical step of ordering one thousand machines off the drawing board, before the first prototype had flown. One of the most advanced features called for by the specification was the installation of remotely controlled armament for rearward defence. This installation was not, however, fitted to the first prototype aircraft, the Me 210 V1 D-AABF (Werke Nr. 2345) which made its initial flight on September 2, 1939.

The Me 210 V1 was a low-wing cantilever monoplane with twin 1,000 h.p. Daimler Benz DB 601A liquid cooled in-line engines. The aircraft was fitted with a twin endplate fin and rudder assembly similar to that employed by the Bf 110, but it was found that this so interfered with longitudinal stability that the Me 210 V2 was fitted with a single fin and rudder. The second prototype also differed in having a cockpit canopy with bulged sides (a feature that was to distinguish all future Me 210/410 series aircraft) and mock-ups of the remotely controlled armament. This was to comprise a 13 mm. MG 131 machine-gun in a remotely controlled FDL 131 barbette, one of which was mounted on each side of the fuselage. Despite the improvements introduced by the Me 210 V2, the aircraft was still extremely unstable, and, as a result, crashed on September 5, 1940 during flutter tests.

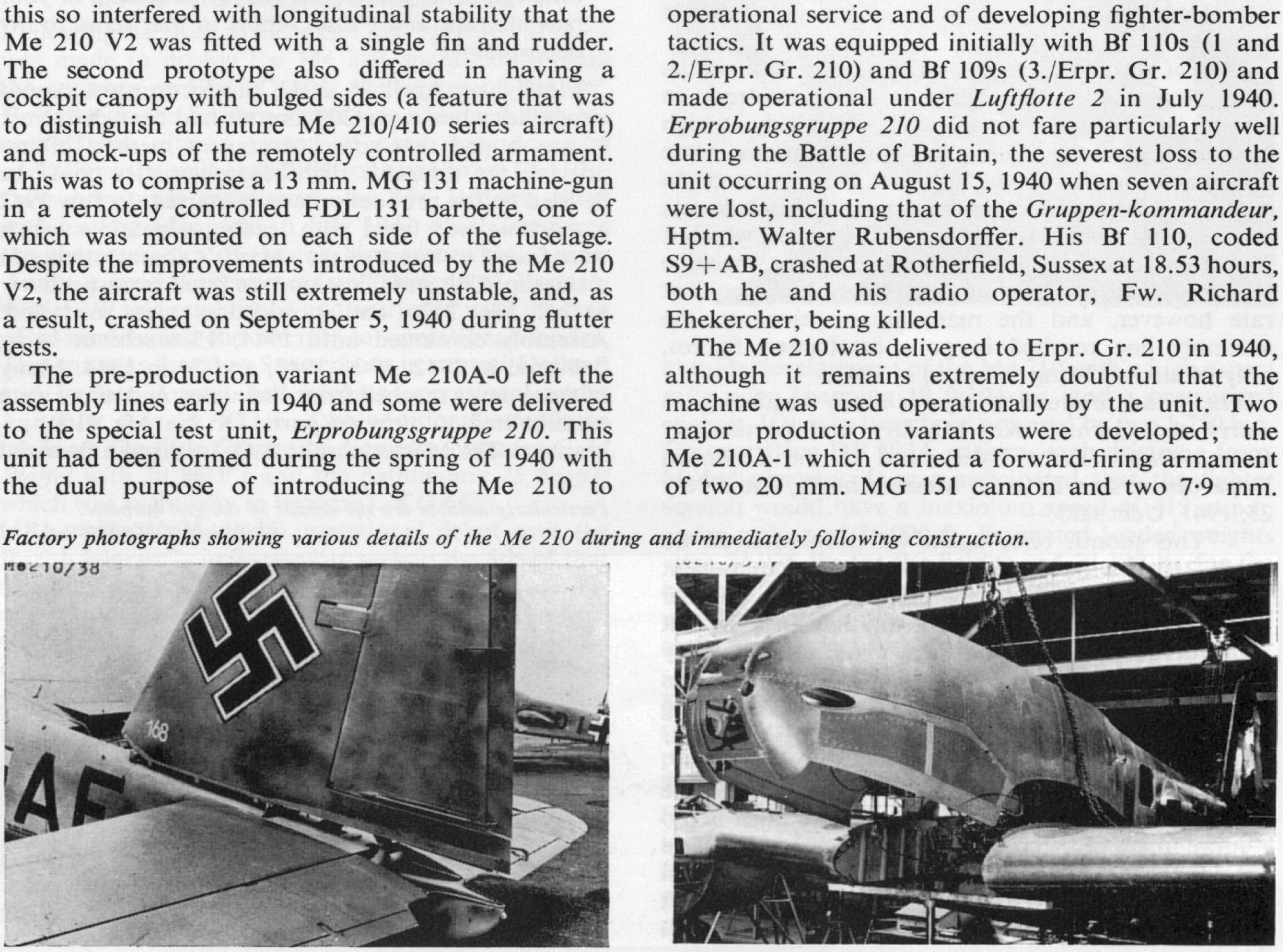
The pre-production variant Me 210A-0 left the assembly lines early in 1940 and some were delivered to the special test unit, *Erprobungsgruppe 210*. This unit had been formed during the spring of 1940 with the dual purpose of introducing the Me 210 to operational service and of developing fighter-bomber tactics. It was equipped initially with Bf 110s (1 and 2./Erpr. Gr. 210) and Bf 109s (3./Erpr. Gr. 210) and made operational under *Luftflotte 2* in July 1940. *Erprobungsgruppe 210* did not fare particularly well during the Battle of Britain, the severest loss to the unit occurring on August 15, 1940 when seven aircraft were lost, including that of the *Gruppen-kommandeur,* Hptm. Walter Rubensdorffer. His Bf 110, coded S9+AB, crashed at Rotherfield, Sussex at 18.53 hours, both he and his radio operator, Fw. Richard Ehekercher, being killed.

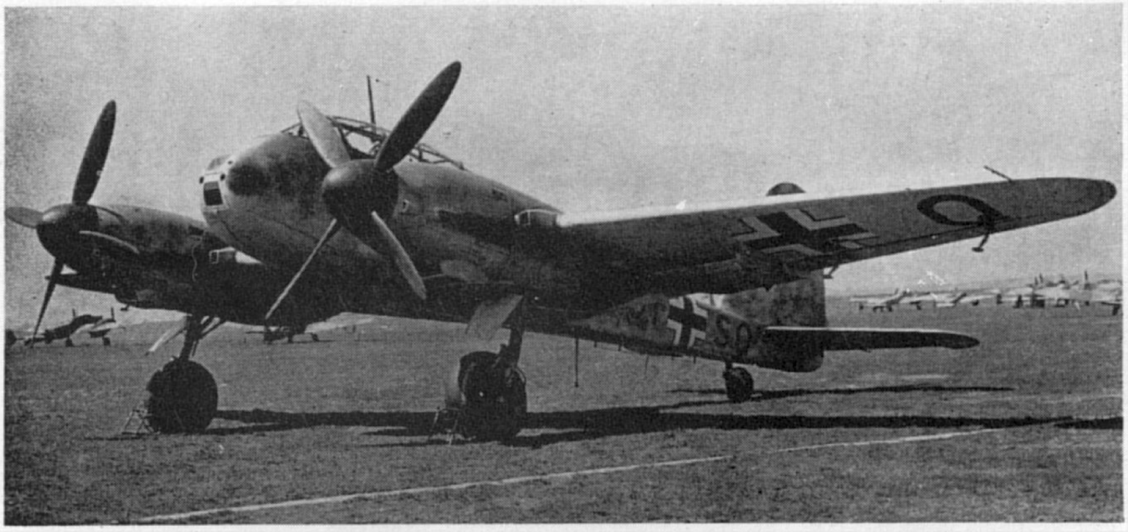


The revised cockpit and single tail of the second prototype, Me 210 V2. Despite the modified tail the machine was extremely unstable, and crashed during flutter tests on September 5, 1940. (Photo: H. J. Nowarra)

The Me 210 was delivered to Erpr. Gr. 210 in 1940, although it remains extremely doubtful that the machine was used operationally by the unit. Two major production variants were developed; the Me 210A-1 which carried a forward-firing armament of two 20 mm. MG 151 cannon and two 7·9 mm.

Factory photographs showing various details of the Me 210 during and immediately following construction.





The Me 210 V13 was specially modified as a prototype for the Me 310, with four-bladed airscrews and a pressurized cockpit. (Photo: H. J. Nowarra)

MG 17 machine-guns, and the A-2 which was similar but could carry two 1,000 lb. SC 500 or SD 500 bombs in an internal bomb bay plus two 1,100 lb. or two 550 lb. bombs on underwing racks. These could be replaced by two 2,200 lb. SC 1000 or SD 1000 bombs mounted beneath the wing racks. The Me 210 B-1, of which four were built, was a photographic reconnaissance aircraft with the two 7·9 mm. machine-guns removed and provision for two cameras.

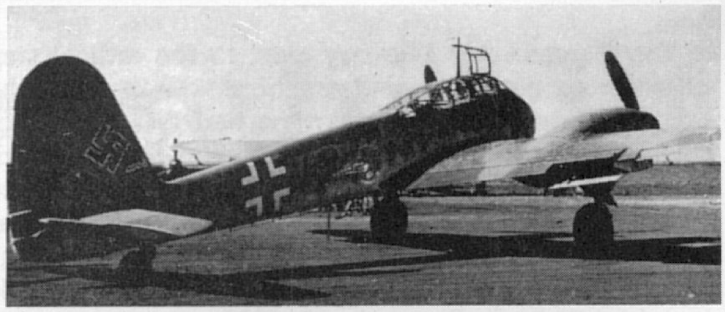
Three further production variants were proposed, but only prototypes were completed. The Me 210C-1 and C-2 were similar to the A-1 and A-2 but were to be powered by the 1,475 h.p. Daimler Benz DB 605B engine. The C-2 was to have provision for carrying a single 3,970 lb. SC 1800 bomb. The Me 210D-1 was a projected version of the Me 210B-1 with DB 605 engines.

One of the major faults with the Me 210 was its severe longitudinal instability. It had a tendency to spin at the slightest provocation, particularly at high angles of attack. Numerous modifications were introduced on the production line as an attempt to cure this. For example, the length of the fuselage was increased by some 3 ft. 6¾ ins. to 40 ft. 3 ins. which it was hoped would solve the problem. The machine still continued to suffer an appallingly high accident rate however, and the many interruptions to the assembly line resulted in poor production figures, only 94 aircraft being delivered in 1941.

The poor production figures were beginning to worry the German Air Ministry and particularly *General-Oberst* Ernst Udet, head of the Technical Department. In a letter to Messerschmitt, dated July 25, 1941, Udet said:—

"This month once again we have received no Me 210s for battle tests, so that the employment of the model has to be postponed for another month. I also have the impression that since the first prototype was built you have made far too many changes. The prototype and the proposed machines in the series are so different that the results of testing are no use for the practical question of behaviour in action.

One thing, dear Messerschmitt, must be made clear between us, and that is that there must be no more losses of machines in normal ground landings as the result of a faulty undercarriage; this can hardly be described as a technical novelty in aircraft construction.

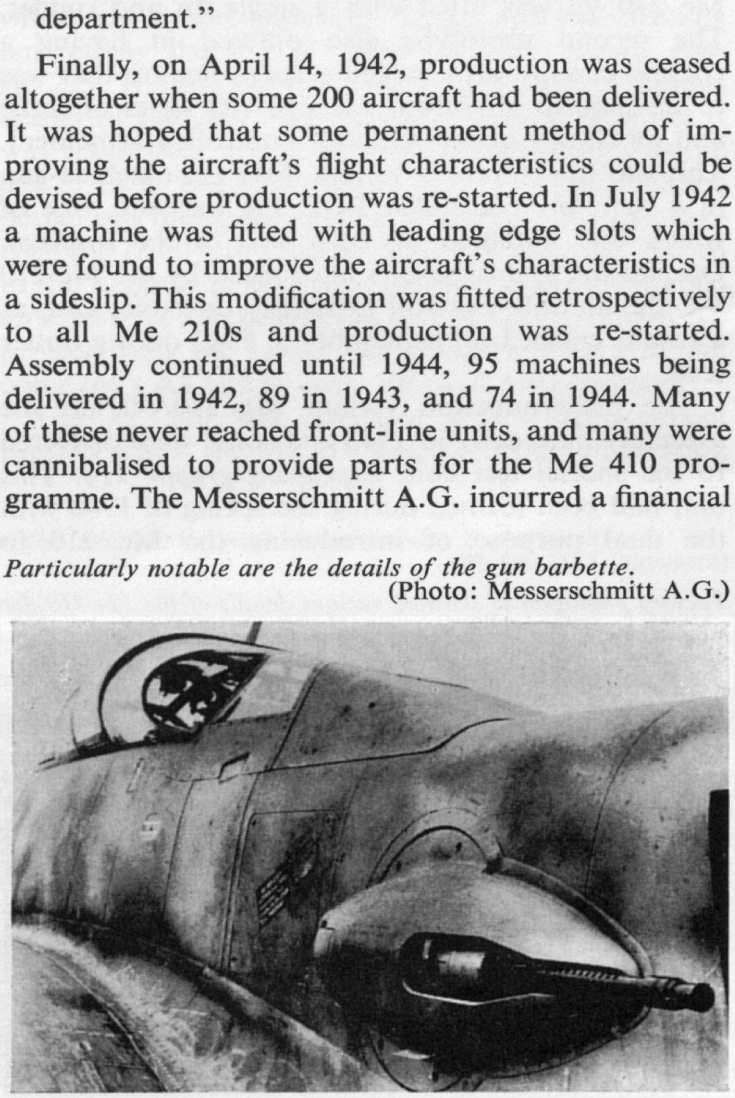


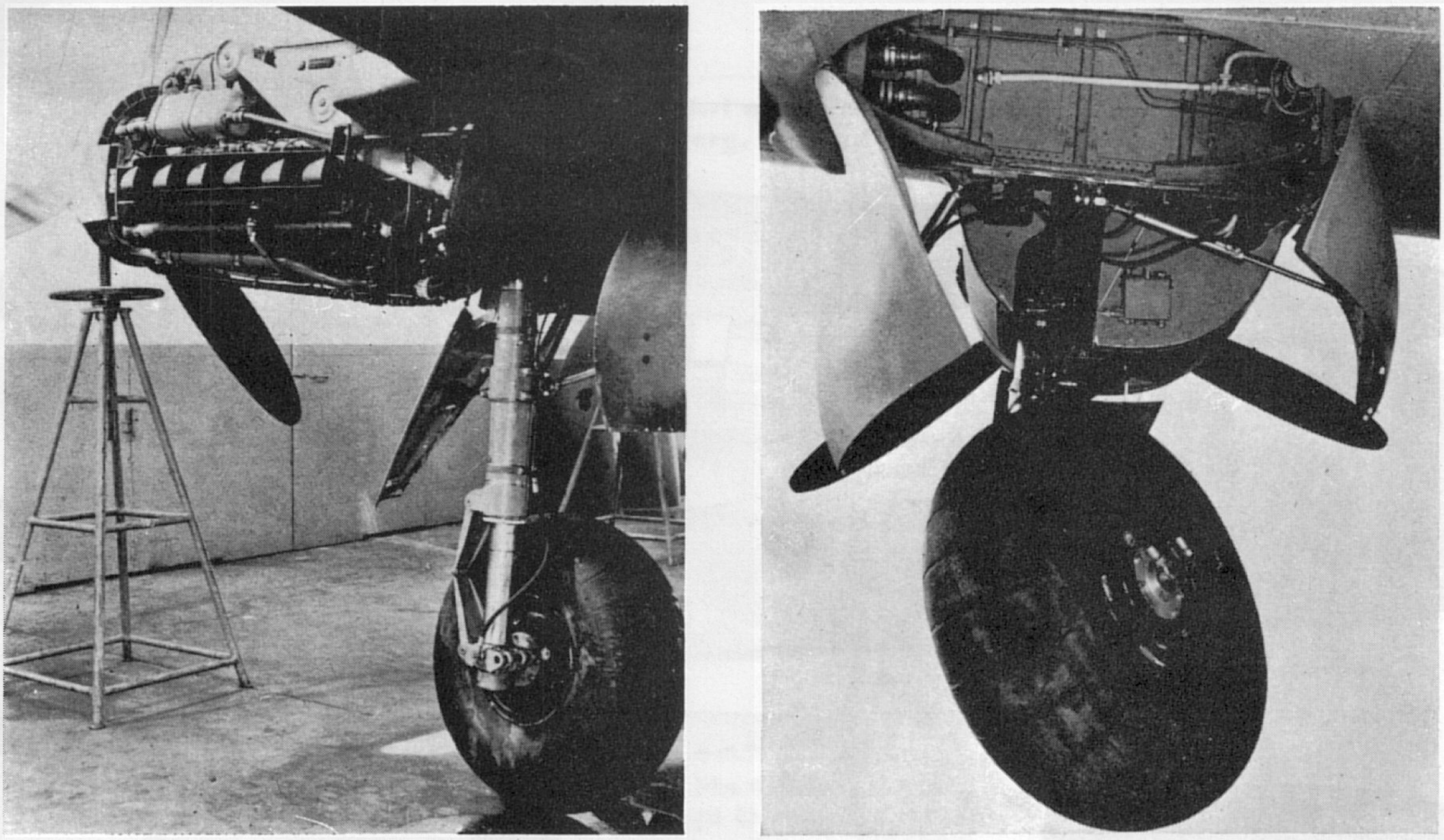
A late production Me 210A-2, W.Nr.420098, "PP+VO" with the FDL 131 barbettes removed. (It appears that an attempt has been made to "touch in" the barbettes on the print.) (Photo: H. J. Nowarra)

All these unnecessary scandals and this waste of time call for higher standards in the testing of your new aircraft, and I shall report in that sense to my department."

Finally, on April 14, 1942, production was ceased altogether when some 200 aircraft had been delivered. It was hoped that some permanent method of improving the aircraft's flight characteristics could be devised before production was re-started. In July 1942 a machine was fitted with leading edge slots which were found to improve the aircraft's characteristics in a sideslip. This modification was fitted retrospectively to all Me 210s and production was re-started. Assembly continued until 1944, 95 machines being delivered in 1942, 89 in 1943, and 74 in 1944. Many of these never reached front-line units, and many were cannibalised to provide parts for the Me 410 programme. The Messerschmitt A.G. incurred a financial

Particularly notable are the details of the gun barbette. (Photo: Messerschmitt A.G.)





An interesting sequence showing the retraction of the Me 210's main undercarriage. (Photos: Messerschmitt A.G.)

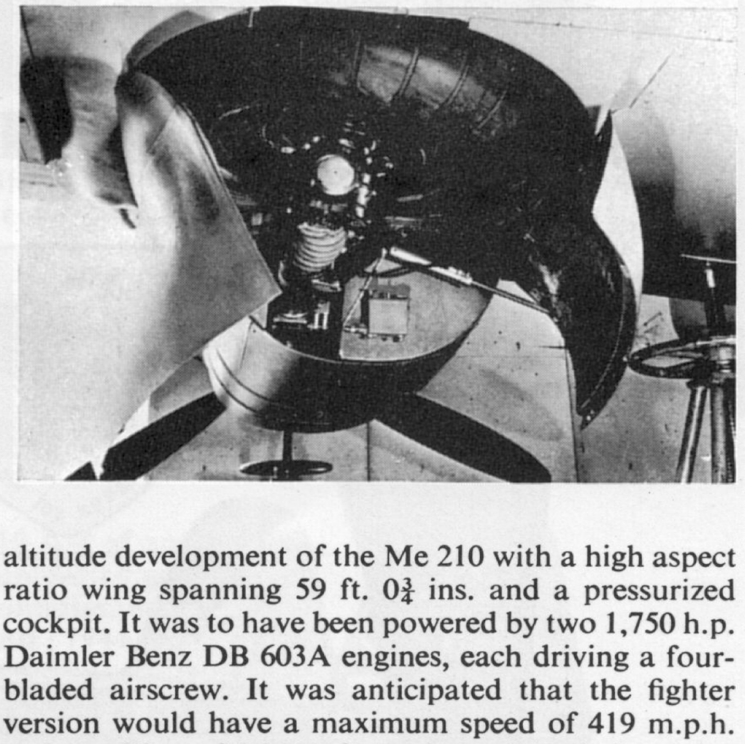
loss of 30 million RM, not to mention the loss of many aircraft to the German war effort.

INTO SQUADRON SERVICE

Following its issue to Erpr.Gr. 210 only one attempt was made to deploy the Me 210 operationally until the summer of 1941. During the winter of 1941/42, II./ZG 1 on the Eastern Front was equipped with the aircraft but after a period of none too successful operations the unit gratefully returned to its Bf 110s.

As previously mentioned, the Me 210 was fitted with leading edge slots in July 1942 which improved the characteristics of the machine somewhat. Accordingly, a special experiment unit designated *Versuchstaffel 210* was established and entrusted with the task of re-introducing the aircraft to operational service. The unit was based at Soesterburg in central Holland and by late August had become operational under *Luftflotte 3* as 16./KG 6. Two additional squadrons made up the fifth *Gruppe* of *Kampfgeschwader 6, 14 Staffel* with Ju 86 P's and the pathfinding *15 Staffel* which was eventually to become I./KG 66.

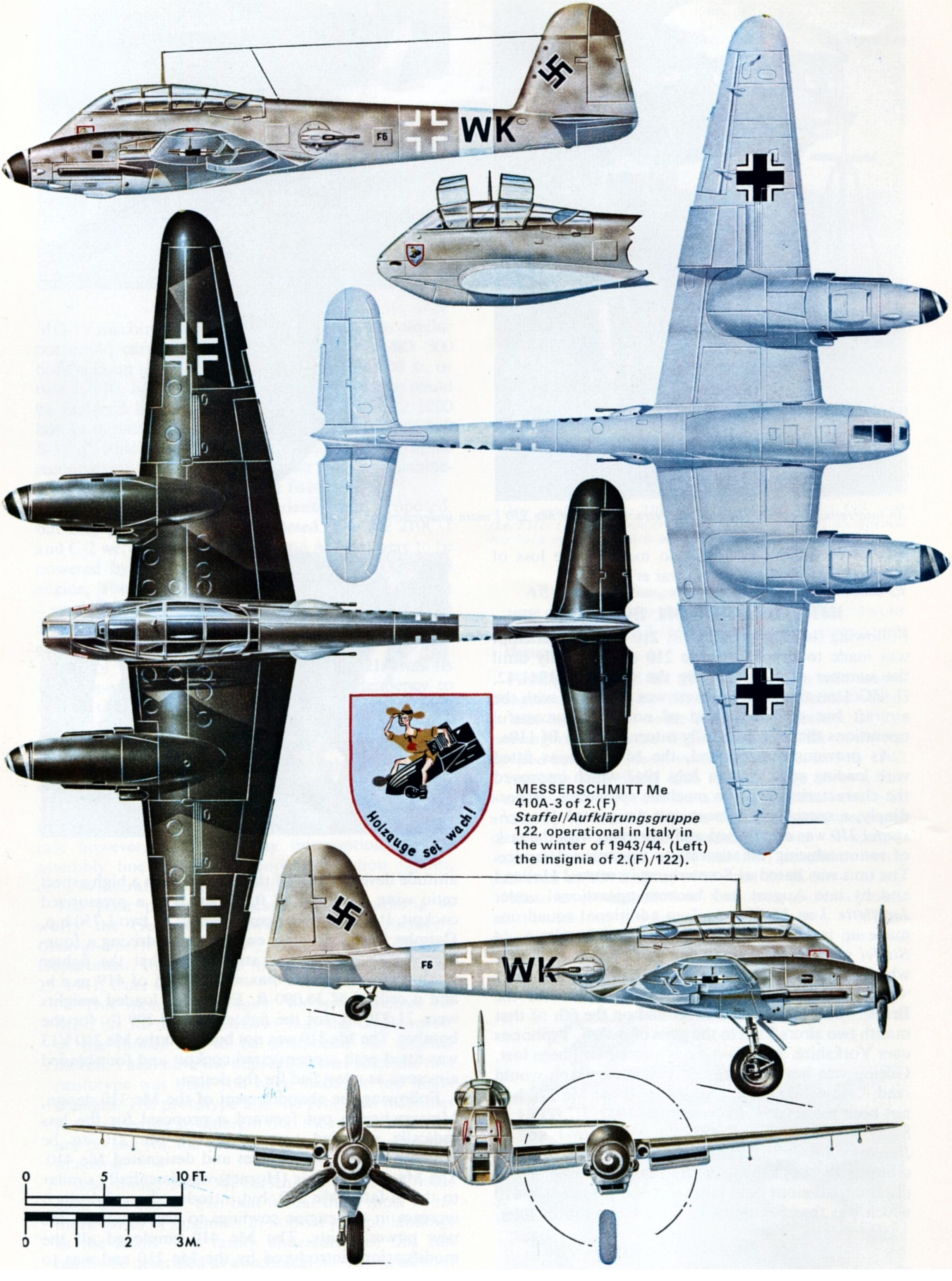
The Me 210 made its operational debut over the British Isles early in September and on the 6th of that month two aircraft fell to the guns of R.A.F. Typhoons over Yorkshire. After two more aircraft had been lost, Göring was heard to remark that his epitaph would read, "He would have lived longer if the Me 210 had not been produced." In November 1942, III./ZG 1 in Sicily was re-equipped with the Me 210A-1 and in January 1943 2.(F)/122 took on hand a few Messerschmitts to supplement its Ju 88s. Following a few desultory missions both units received the new Me 410 which was then beginning to leave the assembly lines.



THE ME 410 SERIES

The Messerschmitt Me 310 was a projected high altitude development of the Me 210 with a high aspect ratio wing spanning 59 ft. $0\frac{3}{4}$ ins. and a pressurized cockpit. It was to have been powered by two 1,750 h.p. Daimler Benz DB 603A engines, each driving a four-bladed airscrew. It was anticipated that the fighter version would have a maximum speed of 419 m.p.h. and a ceiling of 36,090 ft. Estimated loaded weights were 21,976 lb. for the fighter and 24,399 lb. for the bomber. The Me 310 was not built, but the Me 210 V13 was fitted with a pressurized cockpit and four-bladed airscrews as a test bed for the design.

Following the abandonment of the Me 310 design, Messerschmitts put forward a proposal for the less radically modified version of the Me 210 to be powered by DB 603 engines and designated Me 410. The Me 410 *Hornisse* (Hornet) was essentially similar to the ill-fated Me 210, but introduced an eight-inch increase in the engine cowlings to accommodate the new power plants. The Me 410 employed all the modifications introduced by the Me 210 and was to prove a much more successful design than its pre-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Holzauge sei wach!
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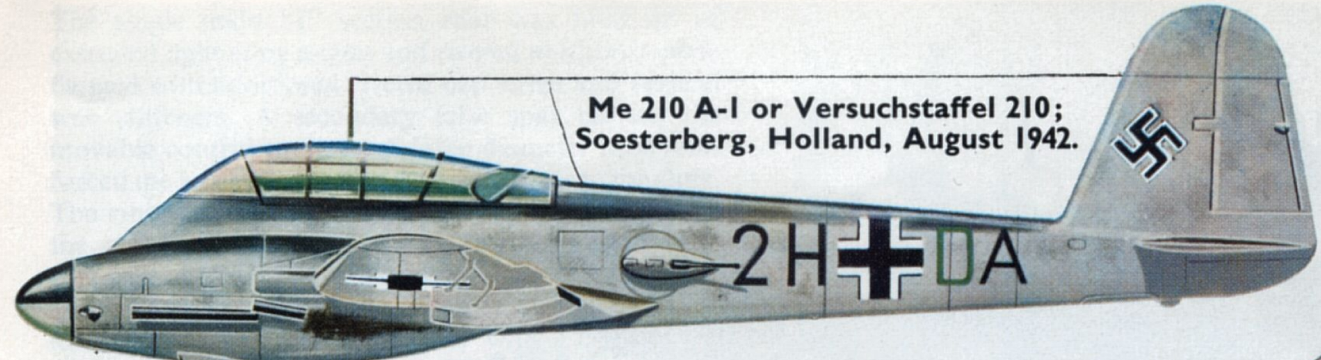
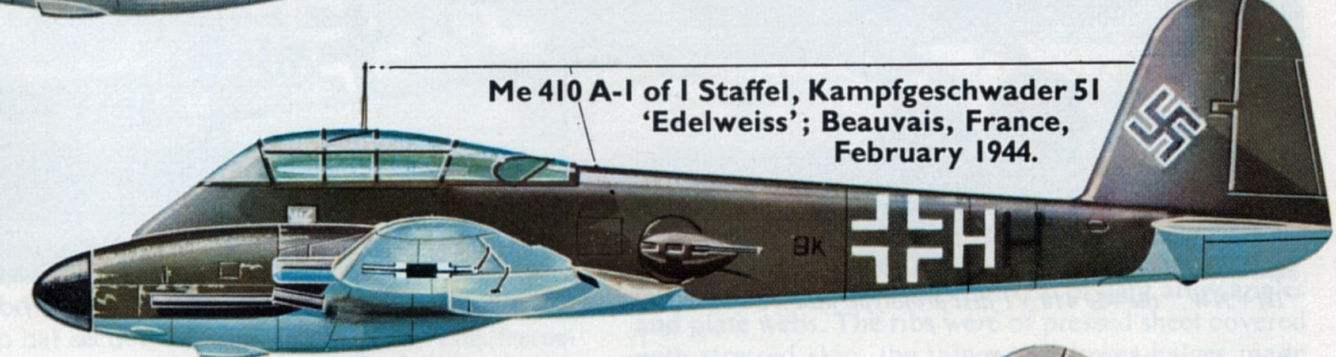
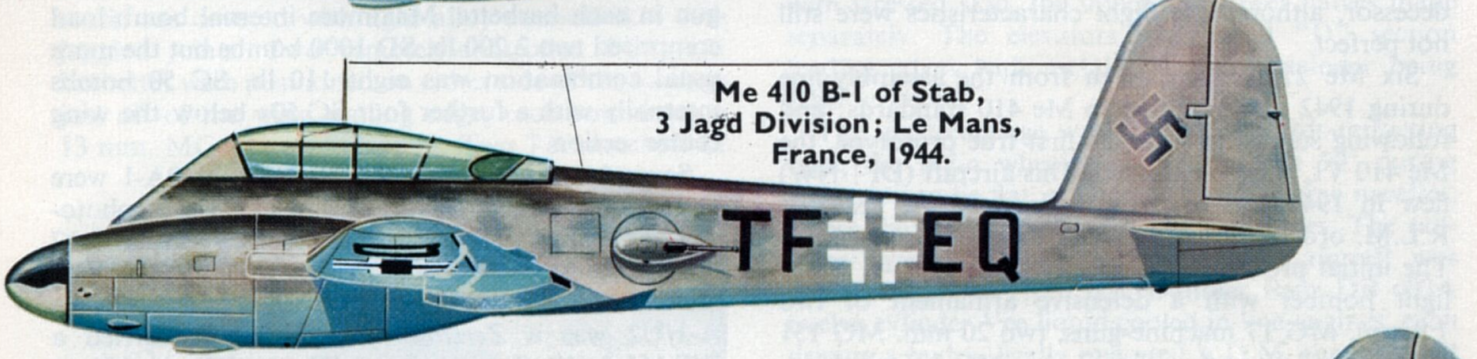
MESSERSCHMITT Me 410A-3 of 2.(F) ***Staffel/Aufklärungsgruppe*** **122, operational in Italy in the winter of 1943/44. (Left) the insignia of 2.(F)/122).**



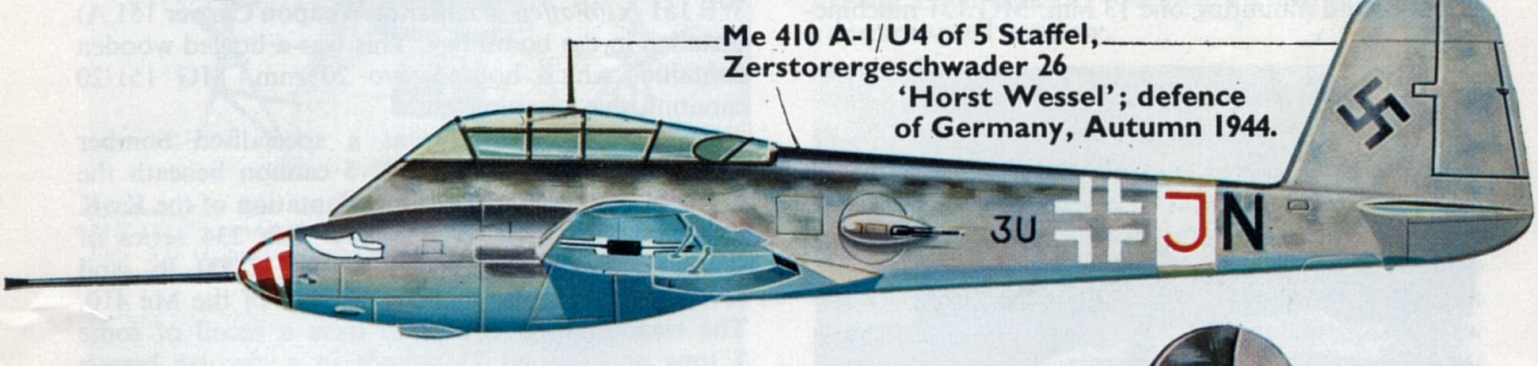
Me 210 A-1 or Versuchstaffel 210; Soesterberg, Holland, August 1942.



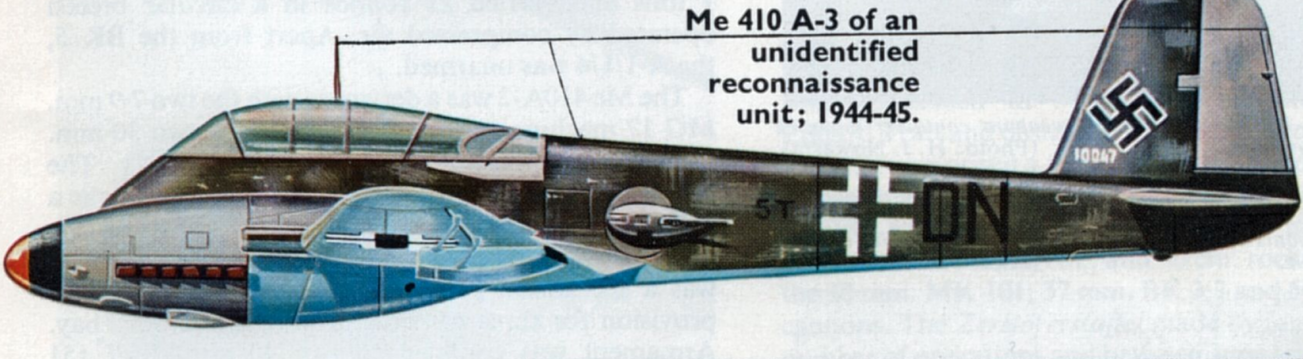
Me 410 A-1 of I Staffel, Kampfgeschwader 51 'Edelweiss'; Beauvais, France, February 1944.



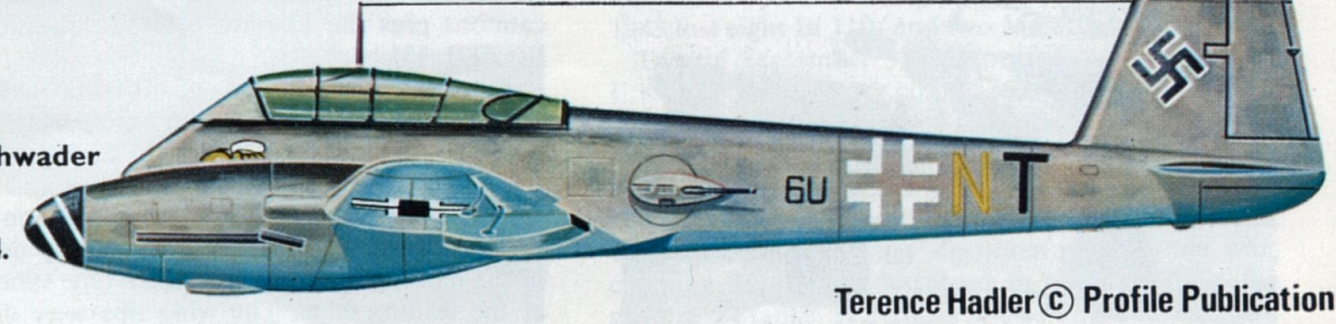
Me 410 B-1 of Stab, 3 Jagd Division; Le Mans, France, 1944.



Me 410 A-1/U4 of 5 Staffel, Zerstorergeschwader 26 'Horst Wessel'; defence of Germany, Autumn 1944.

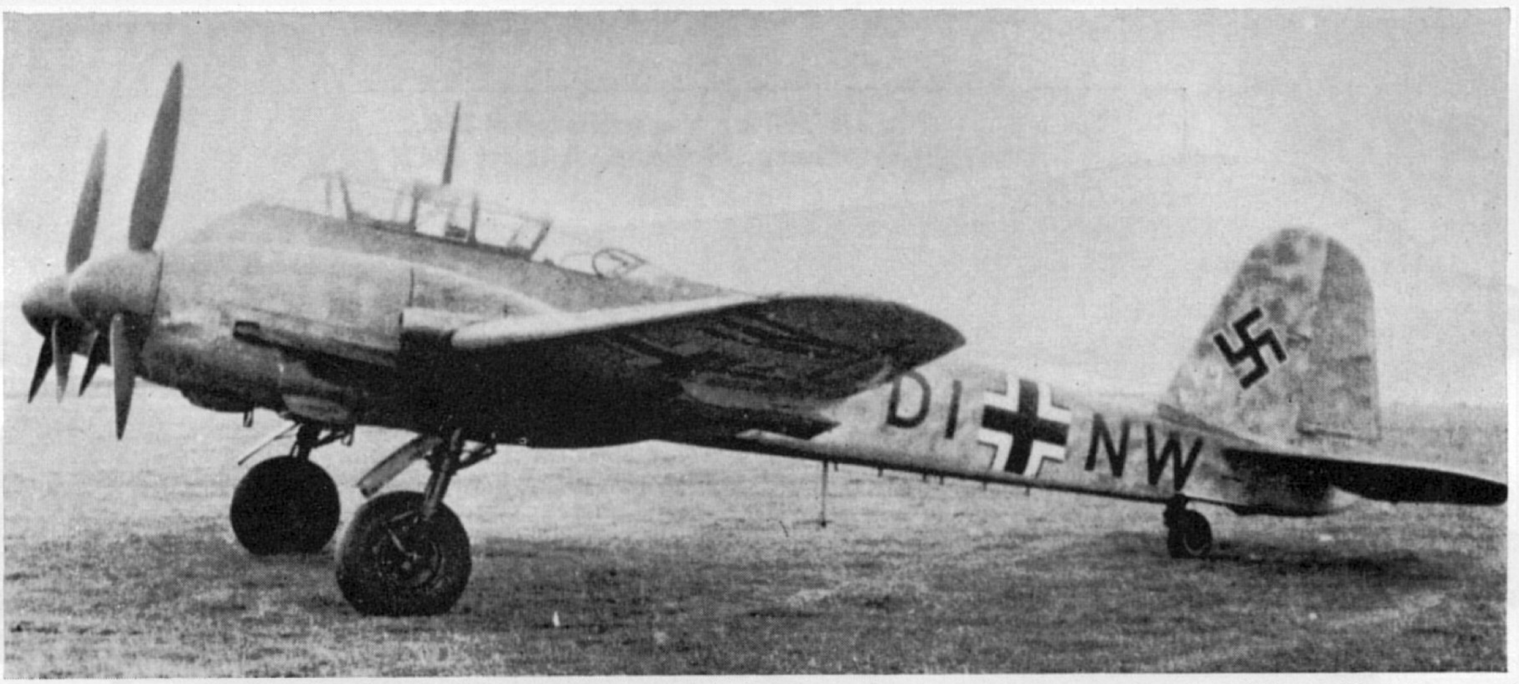


Me 410 A-3 of an unidentified reconnaissance unit; 1944-45.



Me 410 B-2/U1 of 9 Staffel, Zerstorergeschwader 1 'Wespen'; defence of Germany, 1944.

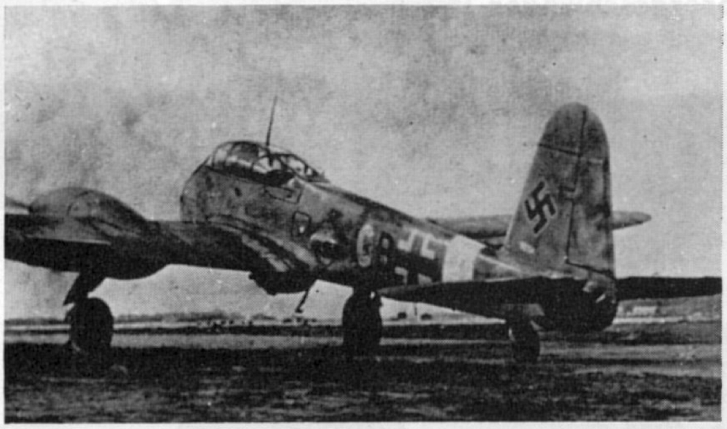
Terence Hadler © Profile Publications



"DI+NW," the Me 410 V1 first prototype with DB 603 engines. (Photo: H. J. Nowarra)

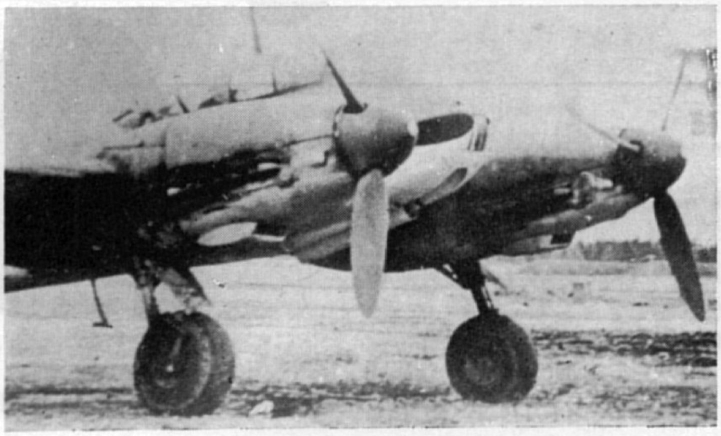
decessor, although its flight characteristics were still not perfect.

Six Me 210As were taken from the assembly line during 1942 and modified to Me 410 standards; and following successful tests the first true prototype, the Me 410 V1, was constructed. This aircraft (DI+NW) flew in 1942 and towards the end of the year the R.L.M. ordered quantity production of the machine. The initial production model, the Me 410A-1, was a light bomber with a defensive armament of two 7·9 mm. MG 17 machine-guns, two 20 mm. MG 151 cannon, and mounting one 13 mm. MG 131 machine-gun in each barbette. Maximum internal bomb load comprised two 2,200 lb. SD 1000 bombs but the more usual combination was eight 110 lb. SC 50 bombs internally with a further four SC 50s below the wing centre section.



An Me 410A-1/U2 with WB 151A weapons container mounted beneath the fuselage. (Photo: H. J. Nowarra).

A heavily-armed Messerschmitt Me 410; this machine mounts five W.Gr.21 rocket launchers under the nose. Several ingenious armament layouts were evolved for the Me 410 in its bomber interceptor rôle. (Photo: H. J. Nowarra).



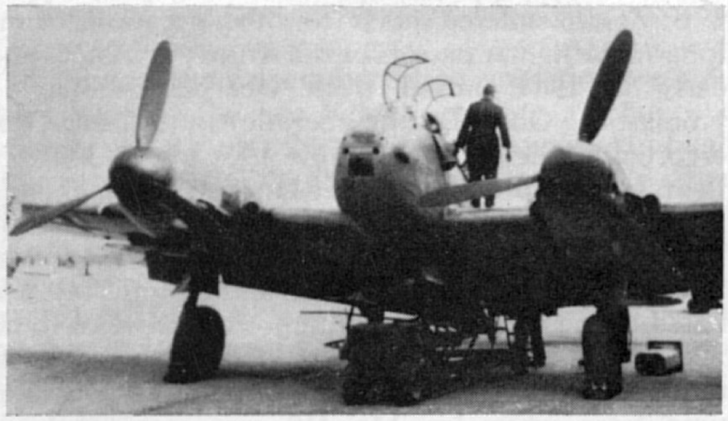
Several conversions of the basic Me 410A-1 were produced including the A-1/U1 which was a photo-reconnaissance machine with the two 7·9 mm. MG 17 machine-guns removed and provision for an Rb 20/30, Rb 50/30 or Rb 75/30 camera in the bomb bay. The A-1/U2 was a *Zerstörer* version which carried a WB 151 A (*Waffen Behalter* or Weapon Carrier 151 A) installed in the bomb bay. This was a bulged wooden container which housed two 20 mm. MG 151/20 cannons plus ammunition.

The Me 410A-1/U4 was a specialised bomber destroyer with a 50 mm. BK 5 cannon beneath the fuselage. This weapon was an adaptation of the KwK L/60 weapon carried by the Sd. Kfz 234 series of armoured cars. It weighed almost 2,000 lb. and severely reduced the manoeuvrability of the Me 410. The weapon was reputed to have a recoil of some 7 tons and carried 21 rounds in a circular breech operated by compressed air. Apart from the BK 5, the A-1/U4 was unarmed.

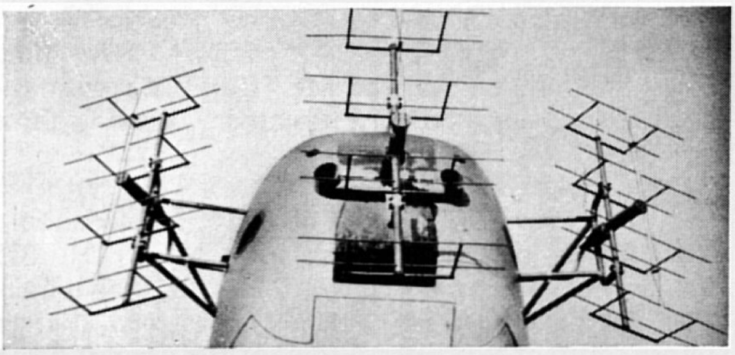
The Me 410A-2 was a destroyer with the two 7·9 mm. MG 17 machine-guns removed, but with two 30 mm. MK 103 weapons installed in the bomb bay. The A-2/U1 was similar to the A-1/U1, the A-2/U2 was a night fighter variant with radar equipment, and the A-2/U4 was similar to the A-1/U4. The Me 410 A-3 was a specialised photo-reconnaissance aircraft with provision for three cameras in a swollen bomb bay. Armament was confined to two 20 mm. MG 151 cannons plus the 13 mm. MG 131 machine-guns in the FDL 131 barbettes.

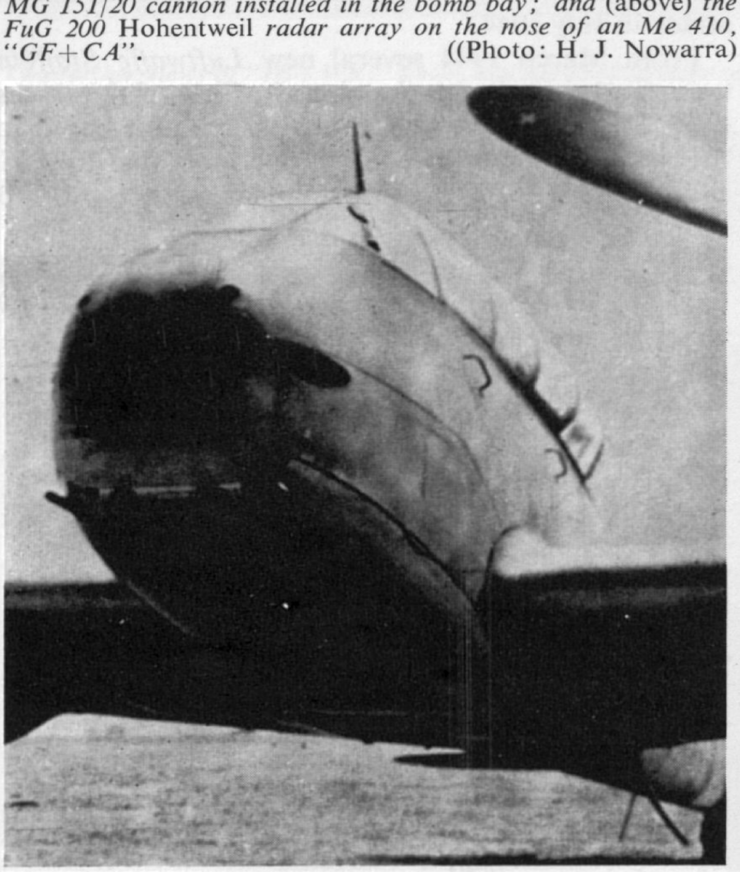
The wings, which were of all metal construction, were built in three pieces, the centre-section and the two outer-wing panels. The main centre-section spars passed through the fuselage structure and the outer wings were attached to the centre section just outboard of the engines by lugs at the top and bottom of the main spar and by a Junkers-type spherical joint at the leading edge. The wing tips were detachable.

The single main "I" section spar was built up of extruded light alloy angles and riveted to a single plate flanged with additional riveted cap strips and vertical web stiffeners. A secondary false spar carried the movable control surfaces. A large diameter tube reinforced the leading edge from the wing roots to the slots. The ribs were constructed in pressed steel sheet and the stringers were of top hat section placed in a spanwise direction. The whole was covered by light alloy stressed skin riveted in place. The wings had leading edge slots and ailerons with "D" section leading edges, fabric covered. Slat-type dive brakes were fitted above and below the wings, just outboard of the engines; these were hinged to the main spar and hydraulically operated.


An Me 410 experimentally fitted with an LT-950 torpedo under the fuselage. (Photo: H. J. Nowarra)

The fuselage was of light alloy oval section monocoque structure built in two halves joined along the top and bottom centre lines by channel section longerons with lipped flanges. The fuselage structure was made up of widely-spaced transverse frames (some formed by flanging the edges of the skin panels) with top hat section continuous stringers. This framework was covered with light alloy stressed skin with joggled joints. Two remotely-controlled FDL 131 barbettes were positioned on either side of the fuselage just aft of the wing trailing edge, each containing a 13 mm. MG 131 machine-gun. Two 7·9 mm. MG 17 machine-guns and two 20 mm. MG 151/20 machine-guns were installed in the fuselage nose firing forward.


(Below), *the nose of an Me 410B-2/U2 with four 20 mm. MG 151/20 cannon installed in the bomb bay; and* (above) *the FuG 200* Hohentweil *radar array on the nose of an Me 410, "GF+CA".* ((Photo: H. J. Nowarra)



The tail fin and rudder were light alloy structures with stressed skin covering. The tailplane was constructed around two spars built up of light alloy angles and plate webs. The ribs were of pressed sheet covered with stressed skin, the upper and lower halves made separately. The elevators had metal "D" section leading edges with metal tips, the remainder being fabric covered.

The undercarriage was of the rearwards-retracting type, the main wheels turning through 90° during retraction to lie flat in the rear of the engine nacelles, where they were enclosed by hinged doors. The tailwheel was also fully retractable. The aircraft was powered by two 1,750 h.p. Daimler Benz DB 603A twelve cylinder Vee liquid cooled in-line engines, each driving a hydraulically operated V.D.M. three-bladed constant speed airscrew.

THE ME 410 IN COMBAT

During the spring of 1943, the *Hornisse* was introduced almost simultaneously to three *Luftwaffe* units. 5./KG 2 was withdrawn from operations on the Western Front with the Do 217 medium bomber to the Messerschmitt airfield at Lechfeld for rest and re-equipment with the Me 410. 2.(F)/122 at Trapani in Sicily flew the aircraft from April 1943, and III./ZG 1 supplemented its few remaining Me 210s with the new Messerschmitt design in May.

Also in May 1943, a special anti-bomber formation was established at Wittmundhafen under Hptm. Eduard Tratt and designated *Erprobungskommando 25*. The unit comprised a fighter, a bomber and a destroyer *Staffel,* the latter being equipped with ten Bf 110s, one Me 210 and two Me 410s. Tests were made by this *Staffel* with 8 cm., 21 cm., and 30 cm. rockets and with the 30 mm. MK 101, 37 mm. BK 3·7 and 50 mm. BK 5 cannons. The *Zerstörerstaffel* made by far the greatest number of operations and between June and December 1943 lost eight Bf 110s and two Me 410s.

During September 1943 Hptm. Eduard Tratt left E.Kdo.25 to take over command of II./ZG 26 "*Horst Wessel*" which had recently been re-equipped with the Me 410 for operations in the defence of Germany. Several of the *Hornisse's* were of the A-1/U4 variant, equipped with the 50 mm. BK 5 cannon. Hptm. Tratt was the highest scoring *Zerstörer* pilot of the war, claiming 38 aircraft destroyed in the air, 26 on the ground, 24 tanks, 312 trucks and 33 anti-aircraft guns.

II./ZG 26 suffered much from the attentions of the long-range fighter patrols of the Allied Air Forces and early in 1944 moved from Oberpfaffenhofen to Königsburg/Oder. During operations the *Gruppe* was escorted by the Bf 109s and Fw 190s of JG 300, but their support did not prevent Hptm. Tratt making a foolhardy single-handed attack on a bomber formation near Nordhausen/Harz on February 22, 1944. The inevitable consequences resulted and Hptm. Tratt was killed, being awarded a posthumous *Eichenlaub* to his *Ritterkreuz* on March 26, 1944. The only eye-witness to his death was Oblt. Prokopp, who was killed a short time later when his Me 410 was rammed by a U.S.A.A.F. Thunderbolt.

Not all the Me 410s of II./ZG 26 were equipped with the BK 5 cannon; one machine, piloted by Lt. Rudi Dassow (a leading anti-bombing ace) was specially modified to carry no less than eight 20 mm. MG 151/20 cannon in the nose. One of Dassow's comrades was later to write: "It was a delight to witness his victories as he fired his watering can". Lt. Dassow was killed on August 25, 1944 when his Me 410 crashed in flames.

One of the most disastrous missions for II./ZG 26 was undertaken on May 13, 1944, when the *Gruppe* took off to intercept a formation of B-17 Fortress and B-24 Liberator bombers. The Me 410's flew level with the American bombers for a short period, but suddenly the aircraft were attacked from above by about twenty Mustangs, with terrible results. Twelve aircraft were written off, many aircrew were lost, and the U.S.A.A.F. formation flew on unhindered to bomb an aircraft factory at Poznan. One very successful pilot who perished was *Oberfeldwebel* Wolfgang Martin, who was reported to have rammed a B-17 with his damaged Me 410 after ordering his crew to bale out. Ofw. Martin had been awarded the *Ritterkreuz* on December 30, 1942 for train-busting operations with 12./KG 3 in Russia.

In the summer of 1943 5./KG 2, which had been expanded to *Gruppe* strength under the designation V./KG 2, became operational with *Angriffsführer England* for operations against the British Isles. The aircraft was to prove quite a formidable adversary for the Mosquitos of R.A.F. Fighter Command, and played a significant part in the "Baby Blitz" of 1943/44.

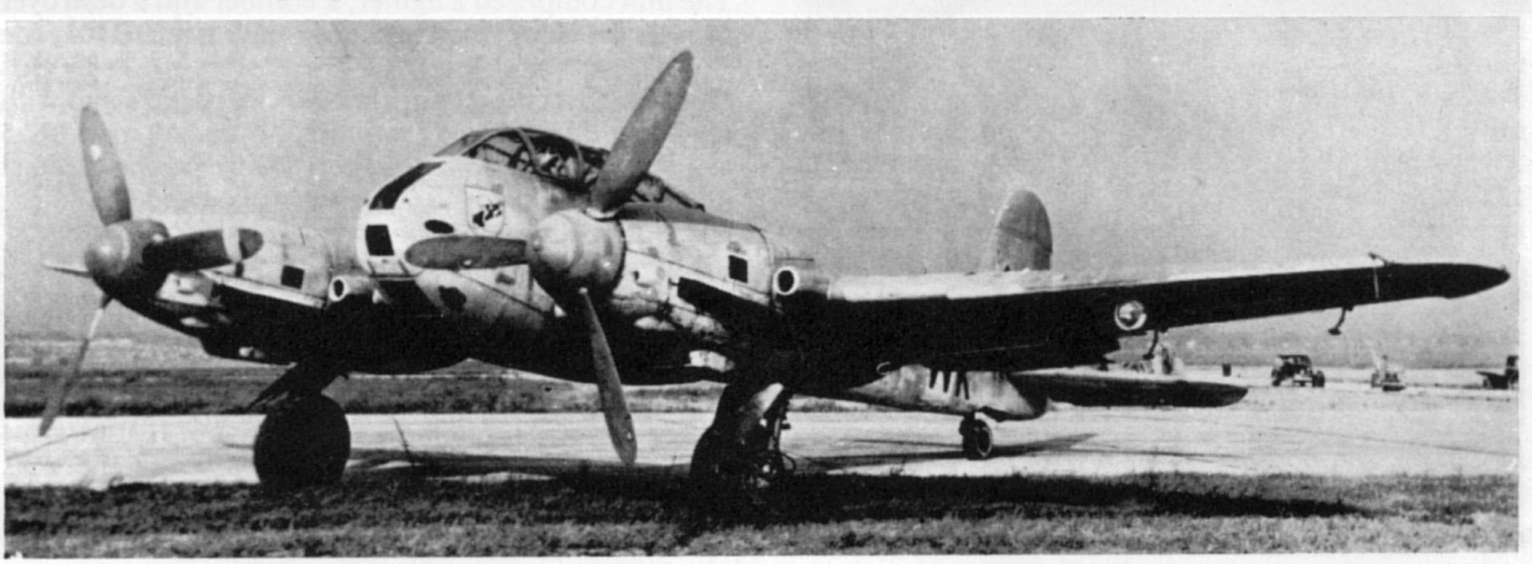
Early in May 1943 I./KG 51, which had been operational with *Luftflotte 4* on the Eastern Front, was withdrawn to Illesheim for rest and re-equipment. It received its first three Me 410s in late June 1943, and by the end of July the unit's Ju 88 A-4s had been completely replaced. The *Gruppe,* together with the *Geschwader Stab* of KG 51, became temporarily operational under *Luftwaffenbefelshaber Mitte* on September 9, 1943 but was soon withdrawn and transferred to Beauvais in December. It did not become fully operational until February 1944, with *Luftflotte 3* at St. Dizier and Beauvais.

Production of the Me 410 was rapidly increasing by this time and several new variants were introduced. The Me 410B-1 was essentially similar to the A-1, but with the nose-mounted 7·9 mm. MG 17 machine-guns replaced by 13 mm. MG 131 weapons. The Me 410B-2 was a destroyer with a WB 151 A container in its bomb bay; the B-2/U1 carried a WT 151 A installation which comprised two 20 mm. MG 151 in a bulged fairing aft of the bomb bay; and the B-2/U2 carried four 20 mm. MG 151 cannon in the bomb bay. The B-2/U3 was a specialised anti-shipping aircraft with the two forward firing MG 131s deleted to make way for FuG 200 *Hohentweil* search radar. Armament included two 30 mm. MK 103 cannons in the bomb bay and provision for a torpedo under the fuselage. The B-2/R2 carried two 30 mm. MK 108 cannon in addition to the standard armament, and the B-2/R3 was similar but employed 30 mm. MK 103 cannons. The final production version was the Me 410B-3, a reconnaissance fighter with standard armament carrying three cameras in a swollen bomb bay.

Three hundred and eleven aircraft were built in 1943, and 1944 saw a rapid increase in production. Construction of the Me 210 powered by DB 605 engines (not to be confused with Me 410s) was undertaken by the Hungarian *Donau Flugzeugbau* at their factory south of Budapest, a total of 108 aircraft being completed before the plant was destroyed in an Allied attack in July 1944.

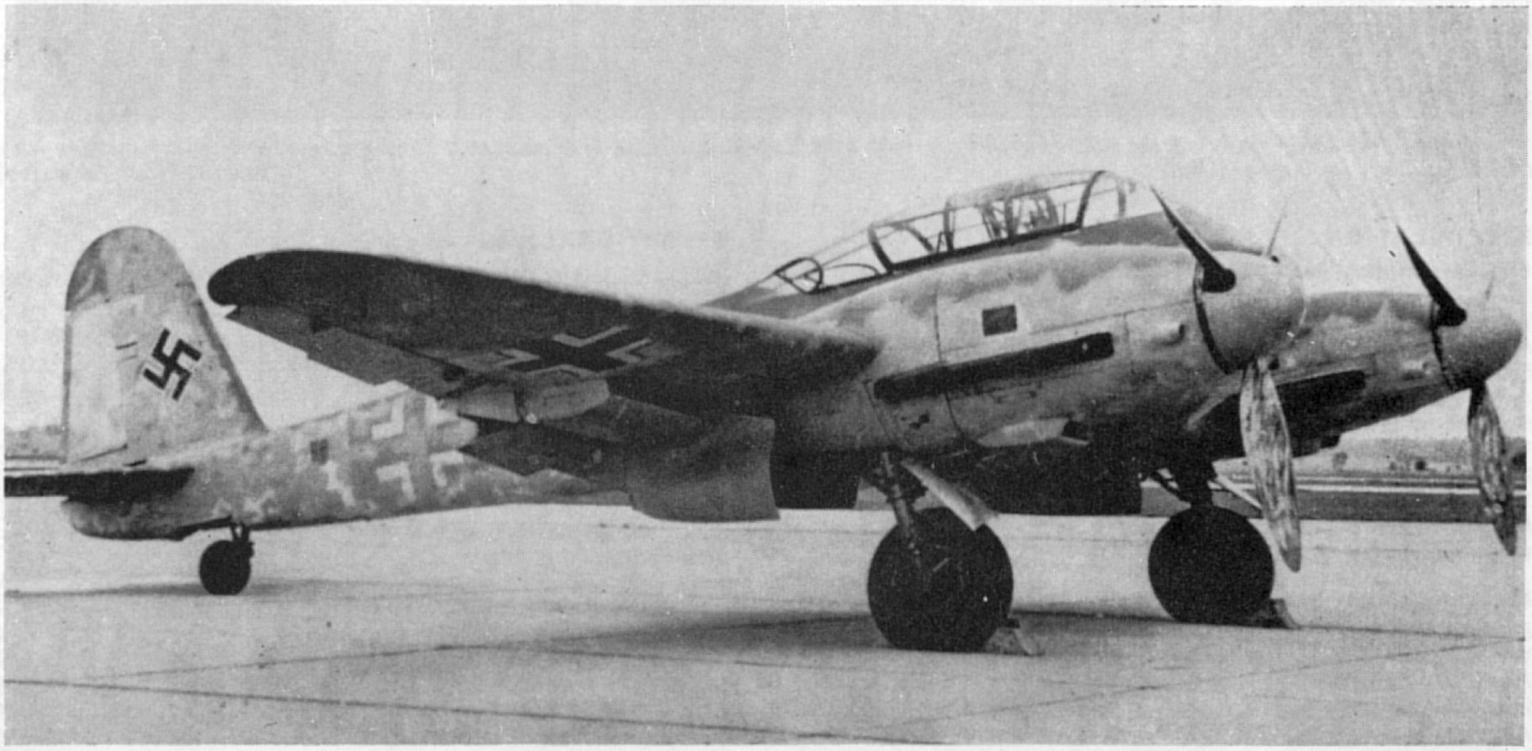
From March 1944 several new *Luftwaffe Staffeln* were re-equipped with the aircraft. First of these was 1.(F)/121, a long-range reconnaissance unit based in France which simultaneously operated the Ju 88T and Me 410A-3. I./NJG 1 supplemented its Bf 110

Me 410A-3 "F6+WK" of the 2nd Staffel/Fernaufklärungsgruppe 122; *note the* Staffel *emblem painted on the nose. This aircraft is the subject of the five-aspect painting.* (Photo: H. J. Nowarra)

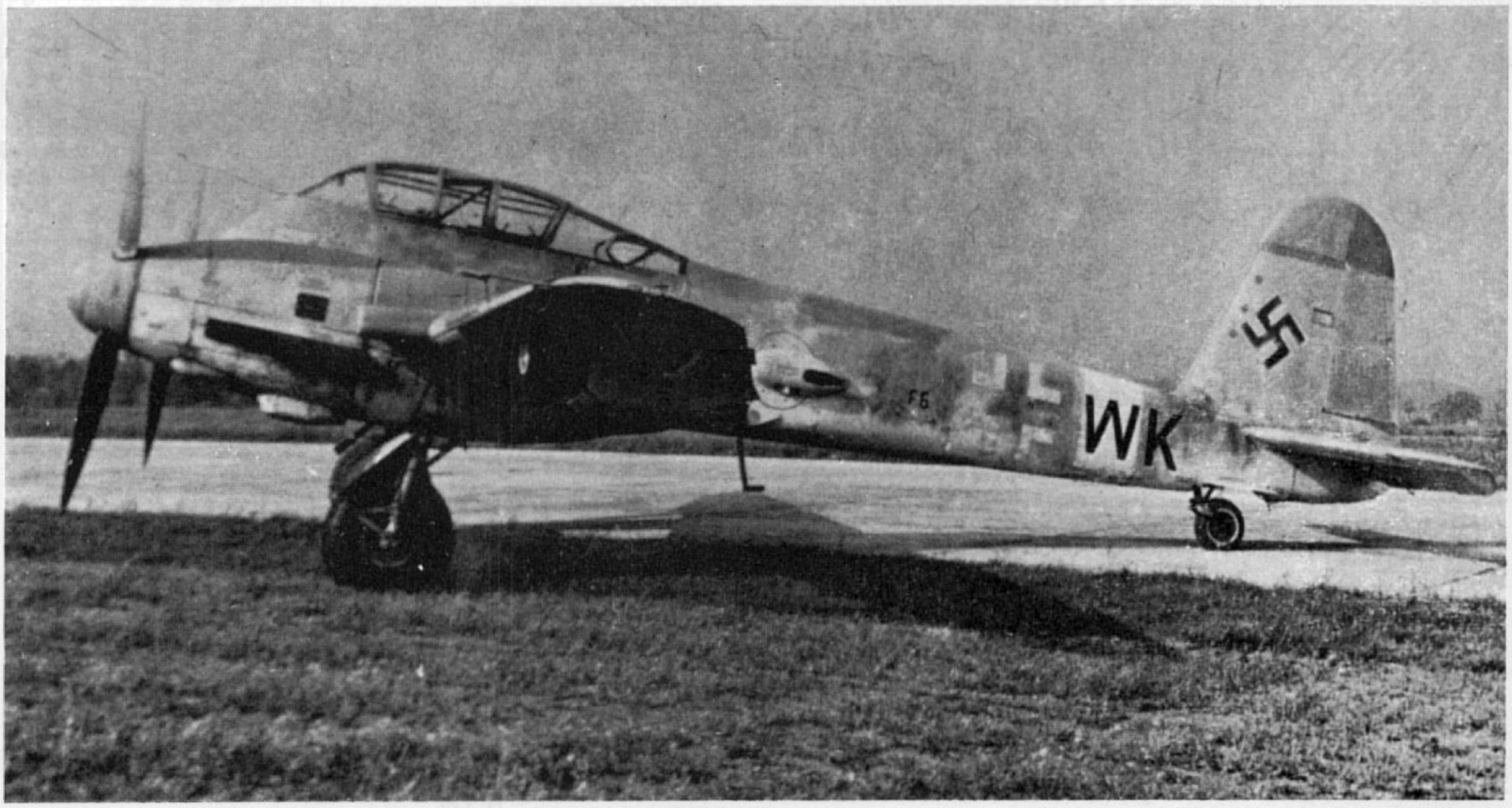


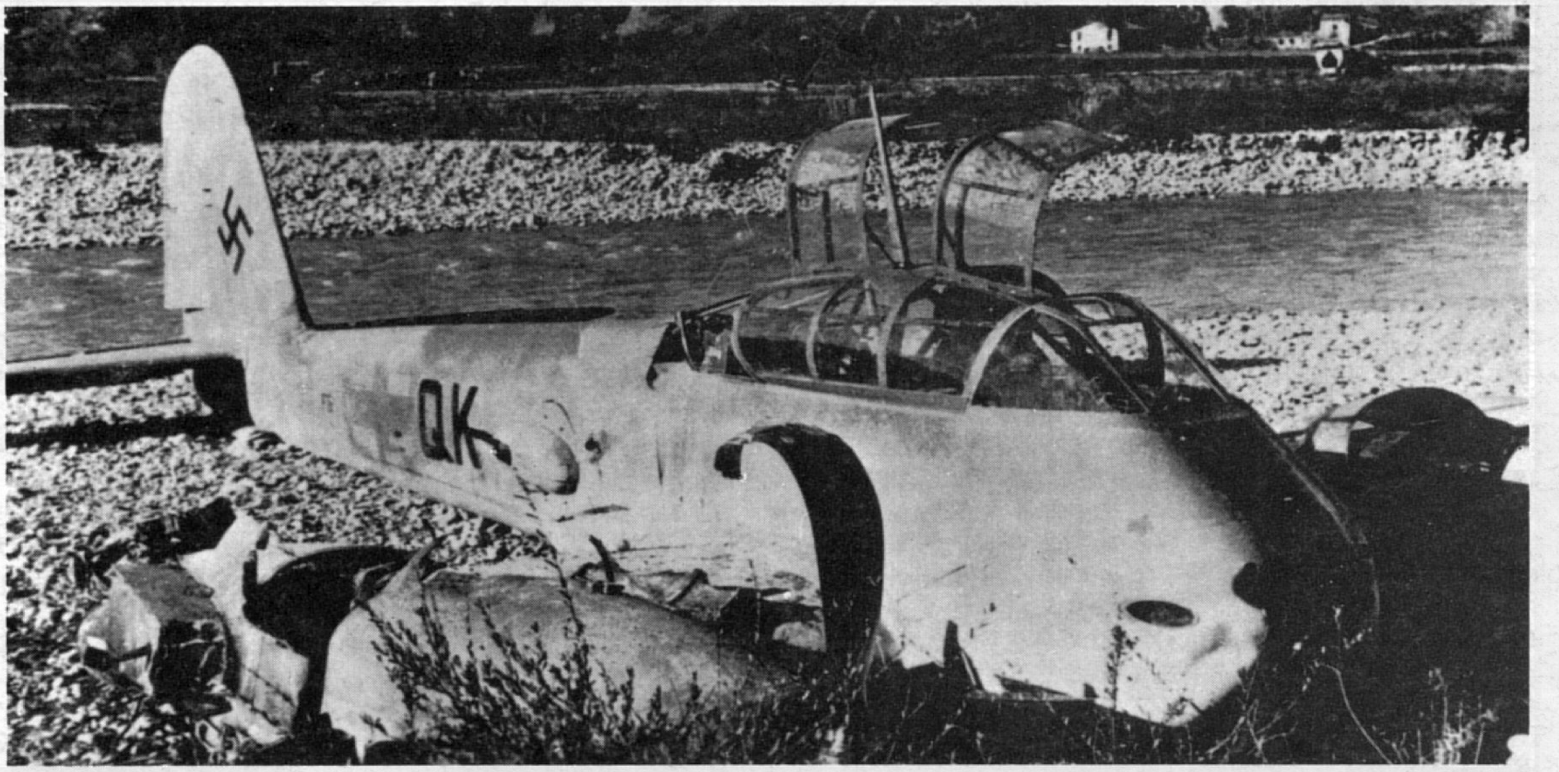
and He 219 night fighters with the *Hornisse* in April, and the following month saw brief tests of the aircraft by I./NJG 5. By June, the whole of *Zerstörergeschwader 26* "*Horst Wessel*" and *Zerstörergeschwader 76* had been re-equipped, deploying their machines in the protection of Germany from U.S.A.A.F. daylight bombing attacks. One of the most notable actions undertaken by I./ZG 76 was on Sunday, July 2, 1944 when in company with the Bf 110s of I./ZG 1 and Bf 109Gs of II./JG 27 the *Gruppe* claimed 45 aircraft destroyed in a tremendous battle over Budapest. Of this total of aircraft destroyed, 34 were four-engined bombers, and eight were claimed by the Me 410s of I./ZG 76 without loss.

Many of the later production Me 410s were delivered to various long-range reconnaissance *Staffeln*, the aircraft often operating in co-operation with Ju 188s. One of the last fighter units to operate the aircraft was IV./ZG 26 based in Norway. Although designated IV./ZG 26 the unit was established after the remainder of ZG 26 had been re-designated *Jagdgeschwader 6* in August 1944, and had no connection with the former unit. IV./ZG 26 was renamed as II./JG 5 "*Eismeer*" in February 1945, and by this stage, apart from reconnaissance duties with *Luftflotte 6*, the Me 410 had disappeared from front line service.



Two further views of "F6+WK," which was captured in Italy intact. (Photos: H. J. Nowarra)





A machine of the same Staffel *as the subject of our five-part aspect painting, "F6+QK" was shot down on a reconnaissance mission over the Allied lines in Southern Italy.* (Photo: H. J. Nowarra)

SPECIFICATION

Messerschmitt Me 210 A-1 (early production).
Dimensions: Span 53 ft. 7¼ ins. length 36 ft. 8¼ in. Height 14 ft. 0½ in. Wing area 389·6 sq. ft.
Powerplant: Two 1,395 h.p. Daimler Benz DB 601 F twelve cylinder liquid-cooled in-line engines.
Armament: Two 20 mm. MG 151/20 cannons and two 7·9 mm. MG 17 machine-guns fixed in the nose and firing forward, and a 13 mm. MG 131 machine-gun in each of two FDL 131 remotely controlled rearward firing barbettes.
Weights: Loaded 17,857 lb.
Performance: Maximum speed 385 m.p.h. Range 1,491 miles. Service ceiling 22,965 ft.

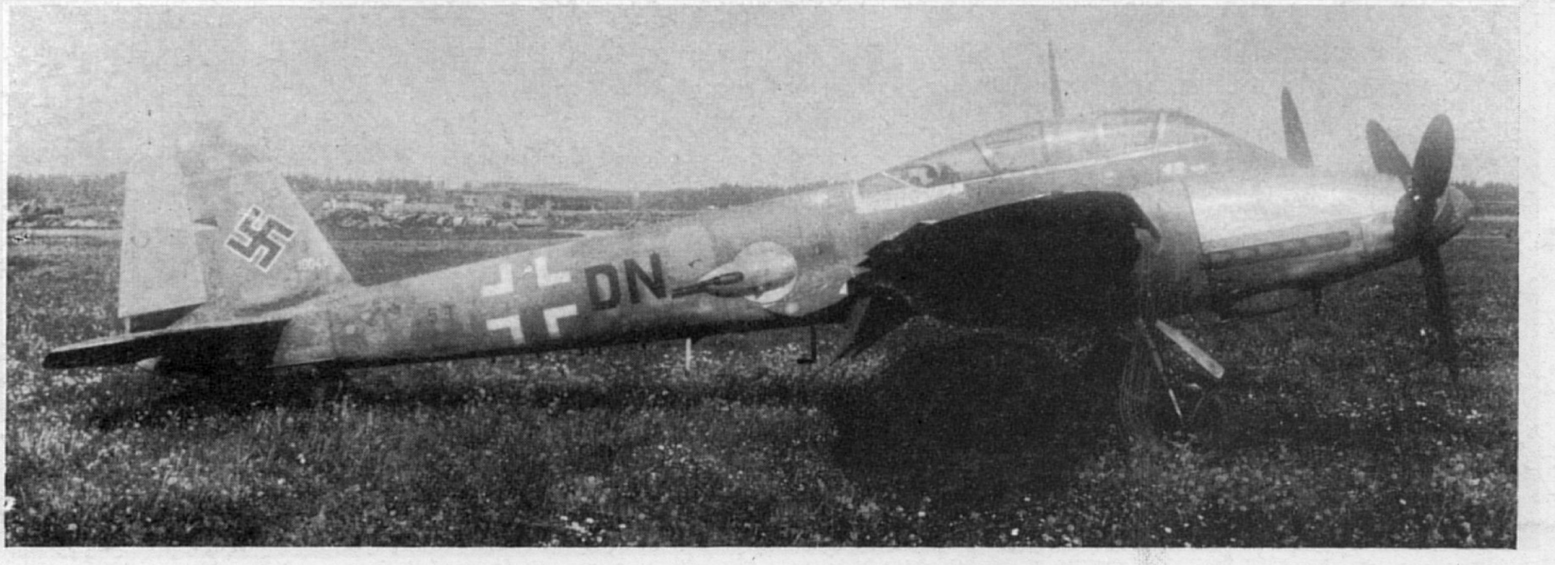
Messerschmitt Me 410 A-1/U2
Dimensions: Span 53 ft. 7¼ in. Length 40 ft. 11⅓ in. Height 14 ft. 0½ in. Wing area 389·6 sq. ft.
Powerplant: Two 1,750 h.p. Daimler Benz DB 603 A twelve cylinder liquid-cooled in-line engines.
Armament: Four 20 mm. MG 151/20 cannons and two 7·9 mm. MG 17 machine-guns fixed in the nose and firing forward, and a 13 mm. MG 131 machine-gun in each of two FDL 131 remotely controlled rearward firing barbettes.
Weights: Empty 13,550 lb. Loaded 23,500 lb.
Performance: Maximum speed 388 m.p.h. at 21,980 ft. Maximum range 1,450 miles. Climb to 21,980 ft. was 10·7 minutes. Service ceiling 32,800 ft.

OPERATIONAL USE

MESSERSCHMITT Me 210	*Code*
Erprobungsgruppe 210	S 9
Versuchstaffel 210	2 H
II and III./Zerstörergeschwader 1	6 U
2.(F)Staffel/Aufklärungsgruppe 122	F 6

MESSERSCHMITT Me 410	
Stab/Fernaufklärungsgruppe 1	—
Stab/Fernaufklärungsgruppe 3	—
3.(F)Staffel/Aufklärungsgruppe 22	4 N
1.(F)Staffel/Aufklärungsgruppe 33	8 H
1 and 4.(F)Staffeln/Aufklärungsgruppe 121	7 A
1, 2 and 5.(F)Staffeln/Aufklärungsgruppe 12	F 6
V Gruppe/Kampfgeschwader 2	U 5
Stab, I and II Gruppen/Kampfgeschwader 51	9 K
I Gruppe/Nachtjagdgeschwader 1	G 9
I Gruppe/Nachtjagdgeschwader 5	C 9
Stab/3rd. Jagd Division	—
Zerstörerstaffel/Erprobungskommando 25	—
II and III Gruppen/Zerstörergeschwader 1	6 U
Stab, I, II and III Gruppen/Zerstörergeschwader 26	3 U
IV Gruppe/Zerstörergeschwader 26	4 A
Stab, I, II and III./Zerstörergeschwader 76	2 N

Messerschmitt Me 410A-3, W.Nr.10047, "5T+DN" of an unidentified reconnaissance unit. It will be noticed that the cowlings, barbettes, cockpit framing and rudder are still in bare metal finish, possibly indicating replacement parts hastily fitted to a damaged aircraft. (Photo: H. J. Nowarra)



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